



**Monthly Meeting Summary**  
**Thursday, January 12, 2017**

**DRAFT**

*This meeting summary was prepared by the CAG Facilitator, to capture the key points, questions, and comments made at the CAG meeting. It is not verbatim, and should not be used as a source of official technical information, individual or agency quotes, or CAG statements or positions. Documents and presentation materials referenced in this summary are posted to [ourpassaic.org](http://ourpassaic.org).*

The meeting opened at 6:15 PM.

**Status Update on NJDEP Passaic River Natural Resource Restoration Projects**

John Sacco, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), was manager of the State natural resource program for 14 years, this role is now being held by Dave Bean.

Natural resource damages, NRD, is the term used to describe the activities to bring natural resources back to a baseline condition process once a hazardous waste cleanup is complete. If it is not possible to get back to baseline, we seek monetary compensation to conduct natural resource projects.

\$335 million dollars was recovered by the State in NRD settlements with polluters of the Passaic River, and these are the first 12 projects we are looking to conduct under this project. We recently conducted a process to get proposals for projects in communities through a grant program. Two solicitations were released on June 10-- \$50 million for waterfront projects in the Newark Bay complex focusing on public access (allowing for individual projects up to \$25 million), and another \$10 million for projects on the Lower Passaic River dedicated to ecological resources and public access (with individual projects up to \$3 million).

The settlement requires us to look to recover lost public use as well as ecological restoration.

Newark Bay projects required a 50% match by communities to help to expand the reach of projects. The State did not require a match on the lower Passaic tributary projects.

NJDEP will be involved in the design and construction of the projects. Proposals for projects in the Newark Bay could be at the concept phase, while projects in the Passaic River had to be at 50% design or more. NJDEP will need to approve work along the way to ensure that we are achieving the goals of the program.

Susan Seyboldt, NJDEP, provided an overview of each of the awarded projects.

NJDEP received 10 eligible projects on Newark Bay, and is awarding \$47 million total across those 10 projects. Two projects are both getting maximum award of \$3 million on the Passaic and its tributaries work. See attachments A and B for descriptions of these projects.

These projects include boat ramps, parks, marinas, playgrounds, park restoration, walkways and access points. Two projects in Newark include a new boat house for 100 boats and a boat launch in City's east ward, and an \$18 million expansion to extend the Riverwalk project by 1.8 miles with restored habitats, overlooks, an outdoor theatre, and recreational locations.

The two approved projects on tributaries include wetlands rehabilitation and a waterfront park.

CAG Question: What sorts of boat ramps are included?

Answer: All types, kayaks, row, and at least one motorized boat ramp. It is important to note that these are all at the conceptual stages.

CAG Question: How many applications did you receive?

Answer: 14 for Newark bay and three for Lower Passaic.

CAG Question: What was the selection process?

Answer: It is noted in the solicitation, we assembled team from DEP which scored the applications independently and tallied the results.

CAG Question: Are the scores available?

Answer: No, we are not making them available. There were problems with the four projects that were not awarded, all projects that were eligible got awards, and letters were sent to those who did not get awards as to why they were not awarded.

CAG Question: What is happening with the \$3 million not awarded?

Answer: It will go to projects in the area ultimately, some of the awarded projects may ultimately require more funding.

CAG Question: How can the public stay informed about the projects?

Answer: DEP will be staying in touch with the community. Everything has been awarded. DEP is happy to come back to the CAG for additional updates.

CAG Question: What is the timeline for these projects?

Answer: 2 years for completion of design then 2 years to implement the project. They can get up to one year extensions for each.

CAG Question: Was the match required before the grant?

Answer: The applicants had to demonstrate where they were getting the matching funds and proof will be required before work begins. This is a reimbursement grant and the State will be reimbursing the communities for expenses as they are incurred.

## **EPA Project Updates**

Sophia Rini, EPA, discussed the upcoming release of the revised Community Involvement Plan (CIP). This draft CIP is a revision of the previous 2006 CIP with a focus on the lower 8.3 mile cleanup. The purpose of the document is two-fold: to enable community members to understand how to participate and find more information as well as to serve as a useful reference for the site team. CIPs are living documents and meant to be revised as site conditions change. The purpose is not technical, but to inform the community and be accessible.

Alice Yeh, EPA, provided an update on cleanup activities on the River.

## **17 Mile Study**

EPA is working with the Cooperating Parties Group (CPG) on the remedial investigation (RI) report and memos to support the feasibility study (FS). There are many comments and responses back and forth between EPA and the CPG, it is a long process.

## **River Mile 10.9 Removal Project**

The CPG collected some data on the RM10.9 cap performance. This data is currently under review, and EPA is discussing how to interpret the data. EPA will come to the March CAG meeting to talk about these data results and the long-term monitoring plans.

## **RD Schedule**

Glenn Springs is responsible for the activities of the RD, the current schedule takes us through the RD process but does not get us into the actual cleanup in the Remedial Action (RA). EPA anticipates entering into another agreement to do the RA which will have its own list of things to do.

Glenn Springs has submitted the draft project management plan (PMP), a month early. EPA is now reviewing. This is not a technical document, but presents more of an administrative approach to the project. It includes organizational charts of all of the various parties working on the RD, and a project schedule.

All of the documents associated with the RD will go through the same process. EPA will review and comment on the drafts presented by Glenn Springs. Once the document comments are addressed, EPA will share the documents with the public.

There are many documents included in the RD process and EPA will keep the public informed throughout. The five most important documents during the design include the site-wide management plan, site selection and evaluation report, the treatability study evaluation report, 60% design, and the pre-final design.

CAG Question: Do you have a similar timeline for EPA review throughout the process?

Answer: No, it depends on the quality of the product we receive. More complicated documents will take longer. The early documents will set the tone for how long it will take for most documents based on the quality of the work and the review process. We anticipate reviews will take 1 to 2 months on average, hopefully not longer.

CAG Question: Can the CAG weight in on these conversations?

Answer: These are conversations between EPA and the CPG, but we do anticipate more public input on those five key reports identified.

CAG Question: What about the Health and Safety Plan?

Answer: The pre-design plan has a Health and Safety Plan, but the community Health and Safety Plan will happen closer to the actual design.

CAG Question: Does site selection take into account EJ and community health and safety?

Answer: This report will be about the work that Glenn Springs does to select a site, the actual truck routes will be in the RD report which will consider external impacts. Jobs issues and the potential use of Super JTI is not included in the design phase, it will happen closer to RA and once we know who will be doing the work of the construction. The Work to prepare for the RA will be going on as well, want to have responsibility and organizations in place to pick up when the design ends.

When the RD workplan comes in, EPA will want to brief the CAG on the overview of the design process.

CAG Question: What is the emergency response plan?

Answer: An outline of what happens in any emergency during the RA, who will be called, routes to hospitals, spill response, that sort of thing.

CAG Comment: It will be important to coordinate with the City on this.

CAG Question: What kinds of emergencies are anticipated?

Answer: There are boats on the river, people could fall overboard, that sort of thing.

CAG Question: Is this a risk of explosion?

Answer: No, but there will be a sediment processing facility.

CAG Question: When will the navigational dredging happen?

Answer: This involves Congress and the Corps of Engineers, so we do not know at this point.

CAG Question: Could we place the processing facility on water instead of land?

Answer: Yes, that is possible.

## **Lower Passaic Community Involvement Guide for Federal Activities**

Sarah Lerman-Sinkoff is working on a pilot study in conjunction with the COE to create a Lower Passaic River community engagement guide for how the Corps can use different community engagement tools to reach different communities.

A few questions were raised at the last CAG meeting: what is the expected output, what types of information will be included, how will the guide be produced, how will it work in tandem with other grassroots efforts. Sarah provided the CAG with a handout to provide answers to some of these questions.

### **Other Items**

A group of visitors from Brazil that are being affected by dams that result in the loss of farms and land will be visiting Newark. They have been here before in 2014. March 14 is International River Protection Day. They will be conducting a 2-day seminar at Rutgers.

Cynthia Mellon will be coordinating the River Day activities and would like to have the CAG engaged. Getting some resources together, looking for some local acts. It would be good to have a positive public message regarding the cleanup. Does the CAG want to coordinate its March meeting in conjunction with this activity. EPA will also look at potential involvement. Co-chairs volunteered to be liaisons with the CAG.

### **Public Comment**

There were no public comments

The meeting adjourned at 8 PM

## ATTACHMENT A

### NJDEP OFFICE OF NATURAL RESOURCE RESTORATION PASSAIC RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

#### NEWARK BAY COMPLEX GRANT SUMMARY

##### Grant Program Highlights:

- \$50,000,000 available for public access projects at or beyond the concept phase
- Announced on June 10<sup>th</sup> and applications were due on July 25<sup>th</sup>
- 50% matching funding required
- 10 applications received awards
- Total award amount is \$47,701,111

##### Approved Projects:

1. **City of Bayonne** – The City has a two-site construction project planned that will create new public access to the Newark Bay waterfront as well as recreational and educational opportunities through the creation of 1,200 feet of waterfront pathways. The first site is a 500 foot long stretch on the Newark Bay waterfront that when completed will connect two existing waterfront properties and transform the debris stabilized shoreline into a living shoreline. The second site is a 700 foot long stretch of waterfront that will be transformed from a rocky beachfront property with no public access into a fully accessible site through the construction of an elevated eight foot wide boardwalk with kayak access and a separate boat launch. **Total Project Cost \$1,800,026, Matching Grant Award \$900,013.**
2. **Newark Community Economic Development Corporation** – Partnering with City of Newark, Essex County, and the Trust for Public Land. The project will expand the Newark Riverfront Park, including new paths and trails for walking and running, renovated riparian habitats, landscape buffers and gardens for stormwater management and recreation, places to sit and relax, scenic overlooks oriented to key views and a series of “Discovery Barges” that relate to each of the character zones and encourage alliances with Newark based schools and institutions. **Total Project Cost \$48,826,000, Matching Grant Award \$17,962,000**
3. **Borough of Carteret** – The project will implement Phases II and III of the Carteret

Waterfront Marina. Phase II involves the construction of floating docks, boat slips, a floating wave attenuator, a breakwater, and installation of wave screen along the existing steel pier. Phase III proposes a Port Authority Complex building with public restrooms and locker rooms, parking facilities, a pier and fishing access, and other associated upland marina amenities improvements. **Total Project Cost \$13,176,100, Matching Grant Award: \$6,588,055.**

4. **Borough of Carteret** – Carteret Borough will construct two new sections of the Arthur Kill Walkway. The southern section will be approximately 5,300 feet long and will provide a number of structural features and public amenities including a pedestrian bridge, possible observation decks/overlooks, bike racks, benches, shade structures, lighting, emergency call boxes, security cameras, public education signs, trash receptacles and pier access. The northern section will be 2,230 feet long and include a boardwalk and new landscaping. **Total Project Cost \$13,352,080, Matching Grant Award \$6,676,040.**
5. **Passaic County and City of Passaic** – Working with the Trust for Public Land, the County and the City will be improving public access to the Passaic River waterfront at Dundee Island in Passaic City. The project is the first phase of a larger four-part vision for restoring contiguous access to the river. Implementation of the plan will create new public access to the Passaic River and enhance open space for enjoyment along the riverfront. **Total Project Cost \$11,423,000, Matching Grant Award \$5,000,000.**
6. **Essex County** – Essex County will construct a boathouse, boat launch and dock as an extension to the Newark Riverfront Park. The boathouse will possess capacity to contain a maximum of 100 boats year round on the ground floor. The second level will be available as an indoor amenity and concession space for Riverfront Park. **Total Project Cost \$10,000,000, Matching Grant Award \$5,000,000.**
7. **City of Hackensack** – The approved project is one phase of a series of improvements slated for Johnson Park. The improvements to be completed during this phase include the construction of a 3-kayak dock/launch system along the Hackensack River, construction of a separate boat ramp along the river, and construction of a passive park adjacent to the boat ramp and kayak launch. The park will also include a 110 space parking lot and an access road from River Street. **Total Project Cost \$1,390,000, Matching Grant Award \$695,000.**
8. **City of Garfield** – Garfield City is seeking to expand public access along the Passaic River. The approved project will include acquisition of four properties along River

Drive (0.3 miles long), as well as construction of a small earth berm to protect the safety of visitors while maintaining a picturesque view of the river. In addition, the Riverwalk will include a park, playground, gazebo and passive recreational spaces, decorative lighting, and bike trails. **Total Project Cost \$3,450,063, Matching Grant Award \$1,725,031.**

9. **Town of Harrison** – Harrison will acquire a 6.7 acre site on Cape May Street in order to create and enhance public access and enjoyment of waterfront resources. **Total Project Cost \$3,600,000, Matching Grant Award \$1,800,000.**

10. **Middlesex County** – The County will construct a new waterfront park and esplanade adjacent to Washington Street in Perth Amboy. ONRR grant funds will be used for development of 700+ feet of a waterfront walkway, which is part of a bigger recreational facility planned for an 8.8 acre brownfields site bordering the lower Arthur Kill. **Total Project Cost \$2,709,945, Matching Grant Award \$1,354,972.**



## ATTACHMENT B

### NJDEP OFFICE OF NATURAL RESOURCE RESTORATION PASSAIC RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

#### LOWER PASSAIC RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES GRANT SUMMARY

##### Grant Program Highlights:

- \$10,000,000 available for wetland enhancement and/or creation, including public access to open space and the water
- Maximum \$3,000,000 to any one project
- Announced on June 10<sup>th</sup> and applications were due on September 8<sup>th</sup>
- No match requirement
- 2 applications received awards
- Total award amount is \$6,000,000

##### Approved Projects:

1. **Town of Harrison** – The project is the development of a 12.5 acre site to create and enhance public access and enjoyment of waterfront resources to the Passaic River. The proposed park will include fitness stations, a dog park, overlooks, a food truck plaza, playing fields, wetland creation, and will also include interpretive signage relating to the ecology of the waterfront and wetland creation. **Total Cost \$3,000,000, Requested Funds \$3,000,000.**
2. **Bloomfield Township** – Bloomfield plans to convert an urbanized, flood-prone brownfield industrial site into an 18.2 acre municipal park. The project includes wetland restoration, stream corridor enhancement, and the development of a municipal park featuring a meadow, butterfly garden, arbor, environmental center, river access, and a youth soccer field. The ONRR grant funds will be used for the restoration of 2 acres of wetlands on the site. **Total Cost \$16,475,746, Requested Funds \$3,000,000.**